

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.     A communications method comprising:  
2           providing scalable media data;  
3           organizing the scalable media data into a plurality of subparts;  
4           providing a plurality of data requests from a plurality of participants  
5 requesting different ones of the subparts during user interaction with the media  
6 data;  
7           after the providing the data requests, scaling respective ones of the  
8 requested subparts of the scalable media data according to receiving attributes  
9 of the respective participants; and  
10          communicating the scaled subparts to respective ones of the participants.

1           2.     The method of claim 1 further comprising accessing random  
2 subparts corresponding to the data requests, and wherein the scaling comprising  
3 scaling the accessed subparts.

1           3.     The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving attributes relate to  
2 unique parameters of the participants with respect to at least one  
3 communications bandwidth, display resolution, and processing capacity.

1           4.     The method of claim 1 further comprising communicating an initial  
2 one of the subparts to the participants, and wherein the receiving is responsive  
3 to the communicating.

1           5.     The method of claim 4 wherein the initial one of the subparts  
2 corresponds to an initial visual image to be depicted by the participants, and the  
3 forwarding of the initial one of the subparts comprises forwarding a plurality of  
4 data streams of different amounts of data corresponding to the receiving  
5 attributes of the respective participants.

1           6.     The method of claim 5 further comprising depicting the initial visual  
2 image at a plurality of different resolutions using the participants and responsive  
3 to the data streams comprising different amounts of data.

1           7.     The method of claim 4 further comprising depicting visual images  
2 of the media data using the participants, wherein the initial one of the subparts  
3 comprises an initial visual image, and the data requests correspond to interactive  
4 commands generated by the participants requesting additional views of the  
5 initial visual image.

1           8.     The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
2           accessing an index of the scalable media data responsive to the user  
3 interaction; and  
4           identifying the respective ones of the requested subparts using the index.

1           9.     The method of claim 1 wherein the providing the scalable media  
2 data comprises providing scalable media data configured to be scaled according  
3 to at least one scalability attribute, and the scaling comprises matching the  
4 scalability attribute and the respective ones of the receiving attributes for the  
5 respective participants.

1           10.    A communications session organizer comprising:  
2           an interface configured to communicatively couple with a plurality of  
3 participants during an interactive media communications session; and  
4           processing circuitry coupled with the interface and configured to access a  
5 plurality of data requests from the participants during the communications  
6 session, to identify a plurality of subparts of scalable media data responsive to  
7 the requests, to scale the subparts of the media data according to respective  
8 receiving attributes of the participants, and to output the scaled media data to  
9 respective ones of the participants.

1           11.    The organizer of claim 10 further comprising storage circuitry  
2 configured to store the scalable media data.

1           12. The organizer of claim 10 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 further configured to communicate an initial one of the subparts of scalable  
3 media data corresponding to an initial visual image to be depicted by the  
4 participants, and the communicated initial one of the subparts comprises a  
5 plurality of data streams of different amounts of data corresponding to the  
6 receiving attributes of the respective participants.

1           13. The organizer of claim 10 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 further configured to communicate an initial one of the subparts of scalable  
3 media data corresponding to an initial visual image to be depicted by the  
4 participants, and wherein the data requests correspond to interactive commands  
5 generated by the participants requesting additional visual images related to the  
6 initial visual image.

1           14. The organizer of claim 10 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 configured to access an index using the data requests to identify the subparts.

1           15. The organizer of claim 10 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 configured to receive the receiving attributes from the participants, and further  
3 comprising storage circuitry configured to store the receiving attributes.

1           16. A communications session participant comprising:  
2 a user interface configured to receive user inputs of a respective user;  
3 a communications interface configured to receive scaled media data;  
4 a display configured to depict visual information of the scaled media data  
5 to the user; and  
6 processing circuitry coupled with the user interface, the communications  
7 interface and the display, wherein the processing circuitry is configured to  
8 decode the scaled media data, to control the depiction of the decoded media  
9 data using the display, to receive user input comprising interactive commands  
10 corresponding to the depicted decoded media data, to formulate data requests  
11 responsive to the user input, and to control communication of the data requests  
12 to a source of the media data to initiate communication of additional scaled

13 media data from the source to the communications session participant and  
14 corresponding to the interactive commands of the user.

1 17. The participant of claim 16 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 configured to control the communication of receiving attributes to the source of  
3 the media data, and wherein the received scaled media data comprises media  
4 data scaled according to the receiving attributes.

1 18. The participant of claim 17 wherein the receiving attributes  
2 correspond to the respective participant.

1 19. The participant of claim 16 wherein the received scaled media data  
2 is configured to control the depiction of an initial visual image of a subject, and  
3 the interactive commands and data requests correspond to different views of the  
4 initial visual image.

1 20. The participant of claim 16 wherein the processing circuitry is  
2 configured access an index responsive to the user input, and to formulate the  
3 data requests using addressing values of the accessed index.

1 21. The participant of claim 20 wherein the addressing values  
2 correspond to subparts of the media data not yet communicated from the source  
3 to the participant at the time of the formulation of the data requests.

1 22. An article of manufacture comprising:  
2 processor-usable media comprising programming configured to cause  
3 processing circuitry of an organizer to:

4 access scalable media data comprising a plurality of subparts;

5 access a plurality of data requests from a plurality of participants  
6 coupled with the organizer and configured to identify different ones of the  
7 subparts;

8 access a plurality of receiving attributes for respective ones of the  
9 participants;

10                   scale the identified subparts according to respective ones of the  
11 receiving attributes; and  
12                   communicate the scaled subparts to the participants.

1           23.   The article of claim 22 wherein the programming is configured to  
2 cause processing circuitry to communicate an initial one of the subparts  
3 corresponding to an initial visual image to be depicted by the participants, and  
4 the data requests are received in the organizer responsive to the communication  
5 of the initial subpart.

1           24.   The article of claim 23 wherein the programming is configured to  
2 cause processing circuitry to scale the initial subpart using the receiving  
3 attributes, and wherein the communication of the initial subpart comprises  
4 communicating a plurality of data streams of different amounts of data to  
5 respective ones of the participants.

1           25.   The article of claim 22 wherein the programming is configured to  
2 cause processing circuitry to:  
3           access an index of the scalable media data responsive to the data  
4 requests; and  
5           identifying the respective ones of the different subparts using the index.

1           26.   The article of claim 22 wherein the scalable media data comprises  
2 scalable media data configured to be scaled according to at least one scalability  
3 attribute, and wherein the programming is configured to cause processing  
4 circuitry to match the at least one scalability attribute and the respective ones of  
5 the receiving attributes to scale the identified subparts.

1           27.   A communications system comprising:  
2           a plurality of participant means individually for communicating received  
3 media data to respective users, for receiving a plurality of inputs from the users,  
4 and for outputting a plurality of data requests responsive to the inputs; and

5 organizer means coupled with the plural participant means and comprising  
6 means for scaling the media data differently for respective ones of the  
7 participant means including:

8 receiving the data requests from the respective participant means;

9 and

10 scaling requested subparts of the media data responsive to the  
11 data requests; and

12 outputting the scaled subparts to respective ones of the participant  
13 means.

1 28. The system of claim 27 wherein the participant means individually  
2 comprise means for depicting visual images for communicating the received  
3 media data to the respective users.

1 29. The system of claim 28 wherein the inputs correspond to different  
2 views of a given visual image as provided by the users, and the data requests  
3 comprise requests for subparts corresponding to the different views.

1 30. The system of claim 27 wherein the participant means comprises  
2 means for communicating respective different receiving attributes to the  
3 organizer.

1 31. The system of claim 30 wherein the organizer means comprises  
2 means for scaling one of the subparts of the media data for an initial visual  
3 image according to respective receiving attributes of the participant means and  
4 for outputting the scaled subpart comprising a plurality of data streams  
5 individually comprising different amounts of data for depicting the initial visual  
6 image using the participants.

1 32. The system of claim 27 wherein the organizer means comprises  
2 means for communicating an index of the media data to the participant means.

1           33. The system of claim 27 wherein the participant means individually  
2       comprise means for accessing an index of subparts of the media data responsive  
3       to the inputs of the users and for generating the data requests comprising  
4       addressing values for accessing the index using the organizer means.

1           34. The system of claim 33 wherein the organizer means comprises  
2       means for accessing the addressing values and for identifying the requested  
3       subparts using the addressing values.